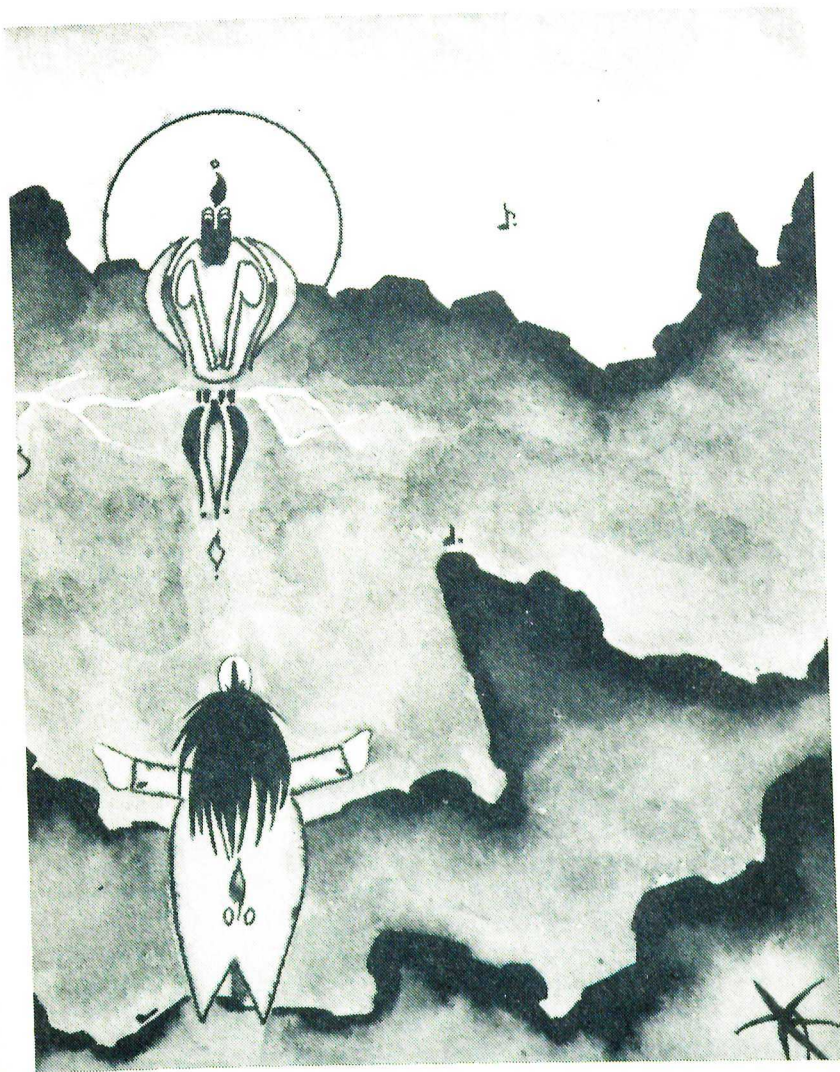


# MANUSCRIPTS



**BUTLER UNIVERSITY**

**FALL 1980**

Had I the choice to tally greatest bards,  
To limn their portraits, stately, beautiful, and emulate at will,  
Homer with all his wars and warriors—Hector, Achilles, Ajax,  
Or Shakespere's woe-entangled Hamlet, Lear, Othello—  
Tennyson's fair ladies,  
Metre or wit the best, or choice conceit to wield in perfect rhyme,  
delight of singers;  
These, these, O sea, all these I'd gladly barter,  
Would you the undulation of one wave, its trick to me transfer,  
Or breathe one breath of yours upon my verse,  
And leave its odor there.

Walt Whitman  
from *Fancies at Navesink*

## Manuscripts

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\* Butler University Short Story Contest, First Place

\*\* Freshman Work

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I'll call for pen and ink, and write my mind.

Shakespeare

*I Henry VI.* Act V:iii



## ASTAFY

Carol Hankins

I first saw Astafy as he came off the plane from Paris. For political reasons French officials had detained the plane for two days. He hugged his little white dog under his chin and peered over its head at the Moscow airport, at the faces that watched the ballet company leave the plane. I called to him, "Astafy Alexandrovich!" He smiled at me and I looked at his face of twenty. His eyes had distinct circles of grey shadows beneath them. When he reached the landing I put an arm on his shoulders and he pressed against me.

Arrangements had been made by the Artistic Counselor for Astafy to stay with me. When he wasn't performing in the evenings I liked coaxing him into sitting with me and talking of girls. There was a chair he preferred. It was the one my babushka had sewn her quilts in, and it had a wide, round back about shoulder height and good, flat arm rests. When he first saw it he rubbed the rose tapestry with his fingertips and refused to sit in it because it was old. I had to coax him into it, too. Once in the chair he'd curl one leg under him and hang the other over a padded arm rest. Of course, his white dog sat on his lap or rested in his arms, and if there was some hard bread or cheese the dog savored a bite, too.

But I preferred the mornings with Astafy and his dog. Astafy was rested then and he'd chatter about the things he'd seen in Paris and the young girls he liked to partner. He'd talk awhile, stop and hold his empty cup under his chin, then smile at me. It was my signal to talk, but I'd always wait until his smile faded before I'd speak. Those rare smiles wrinkled his nose and the corners of his eyes and left two deep dimples in his cheeks. I'd begin rambling about my trifling experiences and fill his cup with hot black tea and cream if I had it. When it was time for him to leave, he'd give a tiny lip grin. It made me think sometimes that he was only being patient with me. Then he'd thank me several times and leave for rehearsals with his little white dog.

Odd how he took his dog with him everywhere. Even to Paris he had taken the dog! A pet was something that seemed unallowed, yet even his dance teachers permitted the dog in class. Pepshinova finished with Astafy one day and watched the two leave the studio. "A child with his puppy," she said to me. Who could resist a child with its puppy?

Yuri had said Astafy was a balletic wonder-child with dreams—breakable. Everyone had agreed with Yuri and certainly no one wanted Astafy Alexandrovich broken.

He wasn't broken when he came back from Paris, but there was a fine crack in his childlikeness. After Paris all the dancers were altered. Some were much more quiet, some much more mean, but all were much more serious. Yuri had been found in his French pastel hotel room with the window broken and his arms scratched and slashed. The gendarmerie had mercilessly questioned the dancers. Had Yuri wanted to defect? Was communism stifling? Had Yuri been miserable? Did anyone else want political asylum? Astafy would try to explain all this pain to me. Yuri, thirty-two year old Yuri, danseur noble Yuri, People's Artist Yuri, spent his evenings in Paris sobbing like a beaten child, holding his head in his hands and shaking his head "no" again and again. The one night Astafy hadn't slept with Yuri, Yuri had decided to die.

After Astafy spoke of this anguish he would lift his dog into the chair with him and gently rub its head. He'd gotten it as a puppy fourteen years earlier. Three hot, soapy baths had rid it of its fleas. Brooms, loud noises and sharp words had mortified it, but in Astafy's lap nothing seemed to disturb it any more. Not once during the time that dog was in my home did it beg for my food or wet on my rugs. And it was brushed so often it never reeked of that musty-rank scent of dog. Oh, that dog adored him. Often it would gaze up at his face for many minutes, then give a single, rapid lick of its pink tongue under his chin. And it had the most delightful habit of pressing its small head, as if in worship, against his chest.

And Astafy adored that dog. Under the covers at night the dog slept with him and was always fed from Astafy's hands. He carried it up the stairs to his classes and rehearsals and it sat, watching him, in his open dance bag. Any chair he sat in was shared with his dog and often he would rub the knobs at the base of its ears and tell it how much he loved it. "More than anything, most precious in the whole world," he would say. And sometimes, sometimes, he enfolded it close in his arms and a big tear would roll down his cheek and he'd say, "Oh, Yuri, Yuri, I miss you so." Then the dog would lick him in the nose and he'd let a laugh and smile escape.

One morning the dog licked a few stewed apples from Astafy's hands but politely refused the rest. As he drank his hot tea it curled up on his bare feet and slept. Gently he woke it, then tucked it into his



sweater and carried it to the studios. I came in late that evening. Astafy had the dog on his lap, coaxing it to eat some sweet bread. "I took him to Dr. Astalov." That was the general practitioner across the street. He'd given Astafy an amber-colored bottle of two-hundred glossy yellow vitamins and he wouldn't accept the two onions and loaf of black bread for payment. Astafy, of course, wouldn't ask for money from me.

Each morning after that Astafy would gently pry open the dog's mouth, stroke under its chin so it would swallow, then poke one of the small round pills down its throat. It learned quickly that it had to swallow the pill or Astafy would retrieve the slippery thing and poke it down again. And until it was swallowed there would be absolutely no food. After a few days it almost took the pill from him.

This pill poking went on for two months and the dog seemed much improved. But one morning it refused to jump up on the chair with Astafy. For several weeks he'd carried the dog up and down all stairs, they seemed such an effort for it, but that was the first time the dog didn't attempt to jump up where it wanted. It looked up at him as if to say, "Oh, I adore you and I hate to ask you, but please lift me to you." Astafy held the dog on his lap and stroked its ears, his eyes growing blacker and shinier.

That evening Astafy and I watched the dog stiffly walk to its water bowl. "It is fourteen, Astafy Alexandrovich." Wrapping his thick coat around the dog and himself, he gently shook his head "no." The good doctor had a four-legged patient again. Astafy let the door slam behind him and I could hear him weeping, "Oh, no, no, no."

They returned joyously. Arthritis and a heart murmur, not uncommon for a dog so old, were all that troubled it. It was not ill, it was not dying; surely there was a long year or two ahead of it. In the cupboard that evening there was flour and sugar and the old woman downstairs gave us four eggs. The aroma of oatmeal cookies, made with some hard molasses I had melted in a pan, filled the tiny rooms. Astafy gave his dog three warm cookies. They were very dry cookies, but shots of vodka chased them down nicely for us. Of course, when he went to bed he took his arthritic, heart-murmuring dog with him. It slept in his arms and repeatedly licked his chin, its foul breath not disturbing him.

The next two evenings I had the pleasure of watching Astafy perform. Eventually, Astafy's drives and loves would make him a danseur noble. That enchanting smile was on his face. After each performance he would half-dance to his dressing room filled with violets and his adoring little dog. Pepshinova told me after the second

night that he'd been that happy before Paris. We celebrated with white, thickly iced cake. Tail wagging, his dog licked most of the sugary icing from his fingers. At home later, hugging the old chair with his long arms, he looked at me like a little boy and begged, "Can I someday have this chair?" I agreed if he'd only sign and give me a pair of his performance shoes. He wrote on his still damp pair and handed them to me with a kiss. Then he sat down with his dog on his lap while we talked of women with breasts, ballerinas with full lips, and prostitutes with round thighs. Food and warmth put them to sleep, and I had to carry first his dog, then him to bed. I undressed him and covered them both with the thick quilts. The dog snuggled against him under his chin.

I hovered over my morning coffee waiting for the two to rise. Astafy entered the tiny kitchen with the dog hanging limply in his arms. Tears streamed down his face while he sobbed uncontrollably. I helped him place it in old, wool blankets in a position he thought would be comfortable, then wrapped the blanket ends around the body. Such was its coffin. Taking the larger of my two trowels I dug a deep hole while Astafy held the body and wept. He made the sign of the cross over it. As he walked to the trees at the end of the street, I packed the dirt tightly over the grave of his little white dog.

Astafy was never quite the same. He talked very little and laughed, smiled, very seldom. At night I'd open his door a crack, as a parent might, and see him sleeping, arms clutching his pillow under his chin. And once I heard him whisper, "Oh, Yuri, Yuri, I miss you so." Poor Astafy. When he left my home I wanted him to have the old chair. He looked at it longingly, then walked away, gently shaking his head, "No, no."



## THREE TEMPLES IN THE COSMIC DUST

Yoko Chase

A transient flow of the spring sky at dawn  
streaming into silky mist  
evokes threads of my religious aspiration  
and a story emerges in the quiet temple of my thoughts

I remember the story of a Japanese architect, working in India  
building a temple with native people  
struggling between racial animosity and a burning thirst for pure water  
Under the imperial sun and dry dusty heat  
a slow, dull spirit engulfed them  
Only his thirst for spiritual water became intensified  
every succeeding moment  
as the dry, dull frustration spread into eternity

One day, driven by an obscure, yet, intense desire  
he partook of their muddy brown water  
The water imbued with the pure native soil and spirit  
emitted its brown hues into eyes gazing at the architect's enraptured  
soul,  
quenched finally by the spirit of a primal harmony

The story creeps into my religious aspiration  
like a silk worm  
chewing the leaves of my imagination

The completed temple  
the symbolic edifice of the oneness of spirit  
shines in the dusty heat  
embracing dry echoes of human struggle  
transcending time  
Here, the brown water purified by the depth and strength of spirit  
gushes in the well of human experiences

I close my eyes and swim into the ocean of time  
with memories of religious architecture  
weaving the tapestry of my vision

Wet pavements in Vienna  
lead to a cathedral  
with its lofty grey steeple crowded by pigeons and the passionate eyes of  
tourists' cameras  
absorbing the stream of people kneeling down  
to the awe and pride of history and art  
The expression of Jesus Christ in his agony of love  
lingering through centuries  
casts pale eyes into dim space between columns  
yet recognizing few spiritual eyes among joyful pilgrims  
shining like pebbles on a rain-washed street

The pearly hues of redemption  
gently arise from the artistic framework of imagination  
The ardent eyes of religious aspiration  
calmly burn in dark corners  
gazing into the unwritten time-space  
seeking for a well of love and resource of creativity

While numerous spiders are weaving time  
in every crevice of human strife  
the cathedral gathers silver webs  
that gently caress scars of sins  
redeeming  
weaving  
re-creating every dynamic moment  
the visions of spiritual sensitivity  
responding to the echoes of creative imagination  
a temple in a Japanese village  
frogs chant to the starry night  
Yet ancient silence prevails  
over the mossy rocks growing alive  
under the peaceful slumber of a temple bell

Forces of contrasts and complements  
assert their innate powers  
merging and vanishing  
into a gigantic spiral storm of time-space  
then  
re-emerge as exquisite reflections of the illusion of life  
Arranged in a simple garden,  
the mystery evokes a universal cry of awe  
and penetrates hearts gazing into the cosmic mirror

Heavy temple bells reverberate in my deep memory  
echoing in the tunnel of my conscious search  
for a passage to unity  
for the wholeness of my spirit  
bringing harmony in the infinitely chaotic current of life

One solitary morning in the silky mist of spring  
sitting in the small living room of a Victorian cottage  
which my family is laboring to restore,  
I concentrate on time through the visions of temples  
gathering the vivid force of re-creation  
amidst the scents of dust, the crowds, rain, pigeons, moss-covered  
rocks, frogs  
and the resounding bells  
with an earnest desire to invert time,  
to drink brown water in a ritual  
to return to Oneness in the cosmic dust . . . .  
through the labor of creation . . . .  
to construct a religious edifice  
that embraces all spirituality  
aspiring for the beauty of life



## THE TRADING POST

Susan J. Clark

"You are now entering the San Carlos Indian Reservation," the sign read.

"We should've stopped for breakfast back in Pima," Garry said. "Not likely we'll find much for the next sixty miles."

We had been driving for about an hour, taking the scenic route from Safford, at the foot of Mount Graham, northwest on route seventy toward Globe. From there we would pick up route seventy-seven and travel south to Tucson. Interstate ten was a more direct route—forty miles shorter—but all desert, while our way would take us through the Superior Mountains south of Globe. We weren't in a hurry, so we decided to be tourists.

The reservation lands were barren; the road was the only break in the monotony. Mountains loomed about twenty miles back from either side of the highway. They were cloaked in a mid-morning haze.

I could understand now why the Indians hated us so. The mountains we "gave" them were the leftovers—left over after the copper, silver and turquoise mines had been scooped up, along with the Mount Lemmons, the Grand Canyons, and other tourist attractions. Nothing was attractive about the reservation. Its mountains interrupted the desert more like warts spreading on a hand. The only vegetation the scaley peaks spawned was some mesquite, supplemented by tumbleweed and cactus on the badlands. The sky was the only item we had failed to cheat the Indians on; it was as blue on the reservation as it was elsewhere in Arizona.

Garry slowed down as we approached some houses and told me to look at them closely. The government built the dwellings for the Indians, he said, and supplemented a place to live and land to work with \$8,000 a year to every Indian over age eighteen, just because he was a Native American. The houses were hollow, though. The Apaches had removed windows, doors and floors, keeping their livestock in the shells. The Native Americans lived in mud huts about a quarter-mile east of the barns.

We had passed a couple of country stores and, finally convinced we weren't going to find a restaurant, we stopped at Indian Joe's Trading Post for a snack. Joe's place had rusted gasoline pumps in



front, no longer used. The brands they had offered once, long before the '74 energy crunch, had become as extinct as the prices on the pumps. A palomino with an Indian blanket over its back was tied to a hitching post on the north side of the store, and a drunken Indian was passed out in the weeds to the south. Indian Joe perhaps?

The screen in the door was rusted, and paint was peeling from its frame. It squeaked as I pulled it open, and the warped floorboards winced under my weight. The sun winked at me through slits in the walls; crowds of flies clumped in pow-wows on sticky-paper hung from the rafters.

I glanced at the selection of Hostess treats, grabbed a package of Ding Dongs and handed them to Garry to pay for. He went towards the back of the store in search of milk and fresh fruit, while I checked out the health and beauty aids aisle. Indian Joe's had all the products the drugstores stocked. Right Guard deodorant was available for \$3.89, razor blades for \$4.35 and sewing kits, the travel kind, for \$2.57.

With milk, Ding Dongs and three bananas in hand, Garry approached the cash register; I was right behind him. An Indian boy of about twelve, to whom the horse belonged, was ahead of us. While waiting for his change he looked up at Garry and asked, "Hey mister, that your car?" Garry nodded. The boy leaned to his right to look out the door at the red Corvette, holding onto the counter with his left. He looked back up at us, puzzled, as he walked backward out the door. We heard the horse carry him off while we were paying.

Indian Joe turned out to be the Anglo desert rat with the rotting teeth and furrowed skin who was working the register. While Garry paid him, I squatted to survey the dusty glass case loaded with turquoise jewelry. The menagerie of animals represented in the display with inlaid wings and mottled backs, all the color of the sky, would have made any zoo proud. "All made by Indians on the reservation," Joe said.

Just like every other souvenir in Arizona, I thought, and just as over-priced.

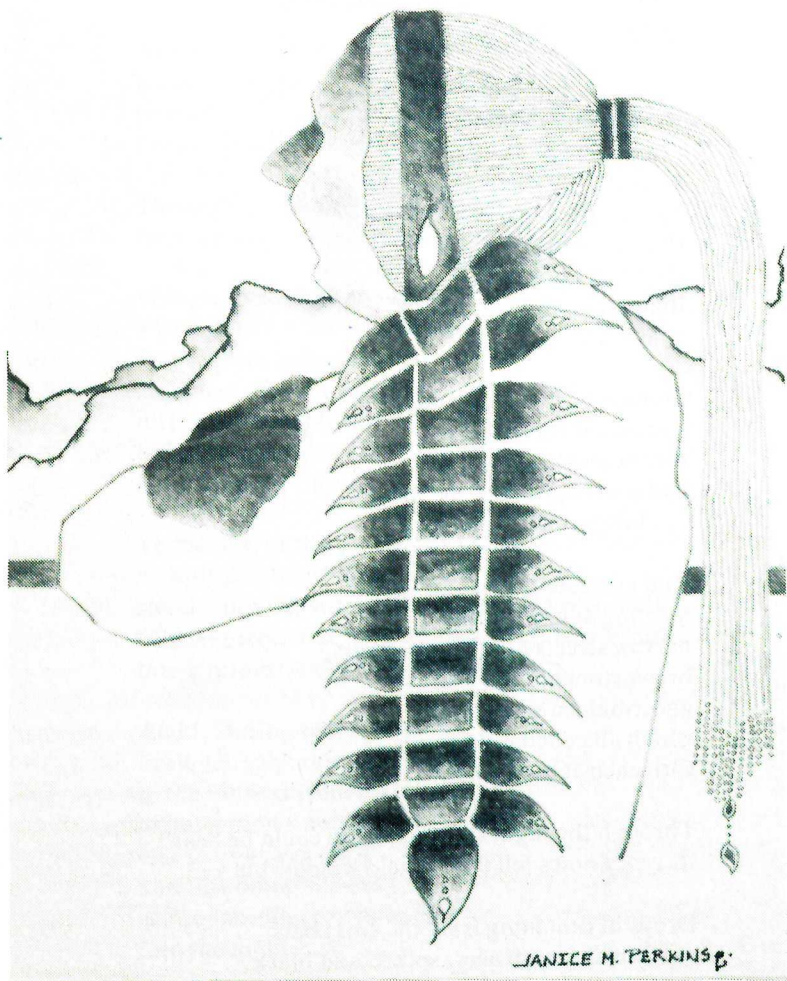
"Care to look closer at any of 'em?" he asked.

His fingers, wrists and throat were as loaded with the blue stuff as the case. "No, thanks," I answered politely, dying to know what his margin of profit was. Garry read my mind and nudged me. "Let's go," he said.

I grabbed the sack breakfast and turned to leave. As I did, I came face to face with a cigar store Indian. "How!" Joe chortled, jowls

jiggling, as I started. Garry put his hand against my back and guided me out of the store. The drunk was asleep still, his hat over his face to block out the noonday sun.

We climbed in the car and left Indian Joe's Trading post in a dust cloud. We hadn't gone a mile when we saw the Indian boy and his palomino. As we approached him it seemed as if he'd been waiting for us; he began to trot, then gallop the horse on the roadside, competing with the car until it left him, too, behind in a cloud of dust.



JANICE M. PERKINS

## ON MEETING KAFKA IN CHICAGO

George Curran

I, the wanderer,  
with wet shoes and coat  
that blended with the concrete,  
crest-fallen, melancholy, searched for  
god in the cityscape.

Through the night a saxophone called;  
its raspy notes tumbled off city walls.

I yanked my trenchcoat tight  
against the sagging evening air  
that cloaked the city in  
shimmery gray silk  
that gathered at puddles  
by my feet.

I remember—Mr. K. invited me,  
a constant companion,  
for tea and misery,  
and crucification of the mind  
. . . but he told me no time.

And entreated, I wandered,  
meeting at each corner  
narrow streets of salt-dulled cars,  
brownstonehomes, and  
ghost-haloed streetlamps  
which all called my name  
with each echoed footfall.

Through the night the saxophone could be heard;  
its raspy notes fell from a gold window blurred.

Drops of rain hung from the cross bars  
of Spanish iron fences, spiked and black,



that line the streets,  
enclosing rectangular plots of grass  
like graves lined back to back.

People came and went, cars cruised by.  
Bits of conversation escaped  
from briefly opened doors that slammed tight  
entrapping one building's cries and lies  
as another trivial drama elapsed.

As I walked on past a towering black oak  
a huge dog emerged and blocked my path,  
growling, glaring, baring yellowed teeth.  
I resisted, desisted, and crossed the street.

Through the darkness the saxophone blared  
from up above where the window glared.

Wet and cold, I approached  
a begger in a black cotton coat.  
Gray-faced, bespectacled,  
crouched over the sidewalk like  
dirt over an empty grave,  
he shot a glance at me,  
but stayed his tin cup.

To the left, at the base of the lamp,  
weirdly defying the cold and damp,  
stood a praying mantis whose angled green stalk,  
filament legs, and bulbous eyes strained upward  
into a primitive offering of raised claws.

And I, staring objectedly,  
unflinchingly, raise my eyes above  
to the blurred golden window  
of indecision's demise  
and felt but a push  
and throbbing silence  
as the speeding car swerved  
into the night.



## LADIES OF THE DANCE

Melissa E. Stone

Your friend is your needs answered. He is your field which you sow with love and reap with thanksgiving. And he is your board and your fireside. For you come to him with your hunger, and you seek him for peace.

Kahlil Gibran

The evening was spiked with an unacknowledged loss hidden beneath the excitement and gaiety of the gathering. The rhythmic music quietly pulsated as the candlelight cast shadowy outlines upon the walls of the attic ballroom. Friends moved about like strangers and acted out their well-rehearsed roles of bartering for her attention. I got another drink.

The young woman graciously responded to their attention but quickly cast a pleading glance to me as I mixed my drink. I confirmed with a shrug of my shoulders and raised my eyebrows. Subtly shifting her weight on to the other foot, she returned her attention to a bearded, young man.

"How brave of you," he exclaimed.

"Your're exaggerating, Thomas. There's absolutely nothing brave about it," she replied irritably.

"Why, Beth, you're leaving us to start a new life in a strange place full of new faces. Now that's brave!"

"Nonsense. It's simply an opportunity I want to . . . to take advantage of," she said looking for a convenient way to end the conversation. "Oh, Thomas! I know that Marie would love to see you. Look, she's right over there at the bar."

As he lurched across the crowded room to me, I caught yet another glance from Beth. "Watch out. He's going to make it hard for you," her warning look implied. I quickly gulped down half my drink.

"Marie, what a wonderful party for Beth. I think that it's great she's going out on her own. Don't you think so?"

"Uh huh."

"Just between you and me, though, I think that there's a man involved. Why else would she leave us like this?"

"She's bored."

"Bored! Why, she's got her work, her family, and her friends right here. It's got to be a man."

"It's just too easy for her here."

"I don't understand. But I suppose you would know. It's extraordinary how the two of you are so close. You act alike, talk alike and even breathe alike! It's as if you're each a separate half of one person."

"So I've been told."

"What's going to happen to you, Marie? Why, I just can't fathom you without her."

"For Christ's sake, Thomas. Beth is not my soul. You make it sound as if I'll cease to be after she's gone!"

"No, I didn't . . ."

"Thomas, I'm sorry I snapped. I'm going to miss her terribly. But . . . hey, would you look at that! Beth's getting together a Greek Butcher's Dance. You go on over and join them. I'll be with you in a moment."

I turned to fix another drink. The previous two had taken effect, leaving me comfortably warm and light-headed. The large room had grown smaller with a golden aura, and I snuggled into an over-stuffed chair to watch my guests and honored friend.

As one corporate body, each dancer picked up first his right foot and then his left, all the while moving clockwise in the circle. The music's beat was slow, and yet the tempo gradually picked up. With the beat, each dancer's movements quickened until the entire circle was moving so fast that I could not discern individual faces. I closed my eyes and finally allowed the tears to spill over.

My thoughts fell like the tears. There are people and places I'll always remember, full of laughter and full of tears. Some are forgotten and some still remain. But of all these friends and lovers, I have loved Beth the best. From the moment we took our first steps together, to that time in high school when we both had crushes on the same football player, she had been my companion in adventure and friend in need. The thought of her absence was not hurtful. But her choice and distant manner left a nagging sting. Perhaps she was my soul.

As I opened my eyes and wished away the tears, the dancers stopped and I caught Beth's eyes. She saw my tears and turned away. She knew.

The record had been turned over and now the beat of the traditional Greek Mating Dance rebounded off the walls. Unlike the



Butcher's Dance, the dancers were paired and the music's frenzied beat slowed to a mellow hum. The women stood in a circle about the men, who surveyed the group for a partner. In turn, each man selected his woman. Beth was immediately selected, and the dance began.

My head pounded from the drinks. The room's golden smallness had transformed into a suffocating nightmare. I rested my head against the back of the soft chair. I closed my eyes, but instead of tears I saw flashes of red and orange against the gray backdrop of my eyelids.

My thoughts flashed like the colors in my head. Go, and beat your crazy head against the sky, Beth. Try, and see beyond the stars in your eyes. It's okay to shoot the moon. Because I'll be here when you come back . . . if you come back.

Suddenly, the flashing colors and thoughts became too great, and I forced my eyes open. The dance was over and each couple stood embracing, except for Beth. She stood alone, discreetly spying upon me. I silently acknowledged her. She would not come back this time.

The music rhythmically played on and my guests once again paired off. This time, however, they paired with a friend for the Greek Friendship Dance. This was a dance of endurance, with one dancer performing prescribed steps in different combinations. The other dancer was to follow the leader's movements. This continued until one of the dancers became tired and gave up.

The dance began and Beth was left alone without a partner. Drawing in her breath, she walked across the room and extended her hand to me.

"You lead. I'll follow this time," she said.

I silently agreed and slowly walked with her to the center of the room. The other dancers parted to let us in. I ritualistically raised my right arm and bent it at the elbow. With the other hand, I lifted my long skirt to my knees and kicked off my shoes. Beth followed.

I slowly started the prescribed steps in a simple triangular pattern. She followed. The music came faster, and my feet broke the triangular pattern falling into the more difficult circular pattern. She followed. The couple next to us dropped out. I glanced at Beth and her responsive smile glimmered with challenge.

I combined both the circular and triangular patterns to create a path of movement that led us around the room. The other dancers had stopped, leaving only the two of us and one other pair in the dance.

My heart pounded and I could barely catch my breath. But my headache was gone and my limbs seemed to move of their own will.

Sensing Beth's exhaustion, I bent over with every fifth step and slapped the floor with my hand. She followed.

The other pair had stopped, leaving only Beth and me. The party gathered around us while clapping their hands and stomping their feet. Through the damp strings of hair that clung to my face, I searched for Beth's eyes. Finding them, I silently formed the word "more" with my lips. She nodded. With this, I quickly spun around, completing a full circle after slapping the floor each time. She followed.

The saliva in my throat had grown thick, and instead of the music, I heard only a pounding in my ears. My muscles ached and my hand burned from hitting the floor. Sweat flowed down my body. I felt my legs give out and I tumbled downward. Beth followed. But we caught each other before hitting the floor, and through the applause, laughter and tears, she hugged me and said, "Lady, our souls will always dance together . . . no matter where we are."



SATURDAY, 20 OCTOBER 1963

Mikael Elam

Problems run through the maze in my head  
The given morals of my life are like the leafs,  
    they die and are shed  
And the Wind cries and blows.

Dead leafs—symbols of my passing fancies  
All fall and blow, are swept and burnt  
Just as the dreams of mine  
And the Wind cries and blows.  
Wood nymphs dance to the strains of Chopin that fill the air,  
They seem to be aware, as the Piper leads me astray,  
    of the feelings I leave as I go away.  
Like a blade of grass, the ashes of a fire and the tintinabulation of a  
    chime, my soul dances away with the nymphs in time.  
The Wind beckons and entices me on farther from the virtue I hear  
We dance on, leaving everything bourgeoisie hold dear  
In a field, I stand like a bud in the spring  
Simple, vulnerable, young—like a dawning  
But, the golden horizon vanishes before I understand  
And like a spirit out of Pandora's box, I stand to face the world, with  
    the nymphs still, dancing among the streams and rocks  
And the Wind cries and blows.

## THE INFIDEL

Frank Werner

It was his eyes that had first brought him to her attention. She was standing in the hall talking to someone, and when she turned to leave, there were those eyes. They reached out and took you, she thought, holding you in suspense. It had been as though she was totally naked before him—as though she could feel his fingers lightly moving across her shoulders, down her breast and sides. All of this while a hundred other people walked past.

She remembered she had shuddered, then turned and stomped away in anger, but now she knew, from that first moment she had been attracted to him.

Attracted to what, those eyes? No, there was more. She had seen him several times later that day. Always from a distance, for she did not want to come under those eyes again. In fact, the thought that she might accidentally bump into him had made her feel tense all that afternoon. Whenever she had seen him though, at a distance, she could not help but watch him—to scrutinize his movement, his manner, his being.

He was tall and slender, but the way he carried his frame left no doubt about his strength. His movements were quick, but never erratic. Every twist of the wrist, every turn of the head, was confidently predetermined, as if for effect. The well-groomed hair, the smart stylish clothes—all of this was for effect, but she had to admit, it worked.

Perhaps if she had stayed at the house Thursday evening, she thought. She had plenty of good reasons, all of that studying that she was now incapable of concentrating on. "Oh, come on," her roommate had said, "we deserve a break." She had gone, and of course he had been there.

He had sat down beside her, and they had a couple of drinks. Thinking back about it, she realized they had hardly talked. She did not know whether he was intelligent or stupid, eloquent or pedestrian, Democrat or Republican. They had left shortly after to go to his apartment. She couldn't even remember the pretense.

Everything about the apartment was tasteful—the couch, the lamps, even the print on the wall—all were disarmingly tasteful. It suddenly occurred to her that here was the key to her attraction. This

setting, this modest refinement contradicted, and made more desirable, the very essence of the man. He was primal. He was the modern ape-man, disguised partially by well perfected social refinement. But it was that primal quality that had reached into her, reached through the centuries of conditioning and cultivation, and touched the core of her primal needs and desires.

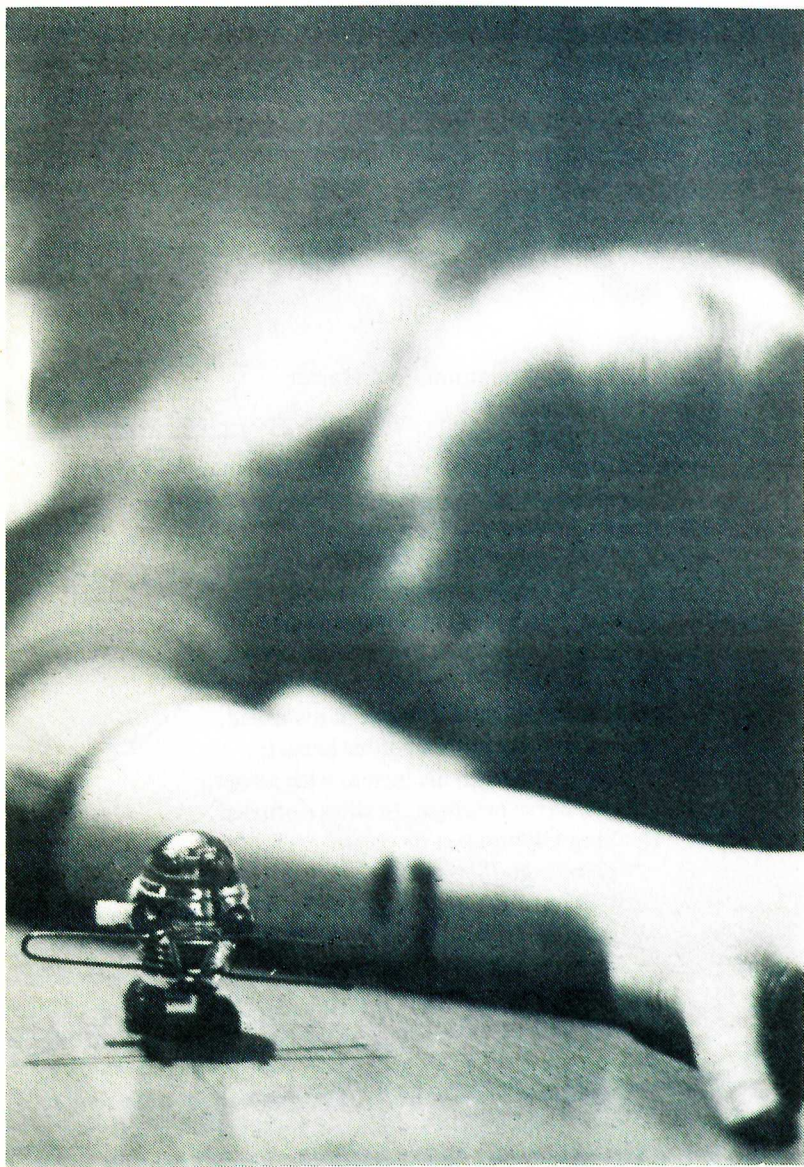
The seduction, if one can call it that, took little time. He had made love to her, then driven her to her sorority house. This was the most painful part to think about, because for her, the experience had been incomplete, the desire unsatiated. He had made her feel guilty. Not through words or actions, for she had not even displayed her frustration to him—had indeed hidden it. It was as though the event made her feel guilty, as if the inability was in her.

She wanted to be angry, to feel disgusted by him. She could not. Her desire for him was intensified. She wanted more than before to be wrapped in his strength. It was futile. She had tried to call him, another woman had answered the phone. She tried to see him on campus, but never seemed to be able to catch him. Now she wanted to be close, but was held off at a distance.

She became acutely conscious when others around her spoke of him. She spoke to them of feelings she had about him, never elaborating on her own experience. Feelings about him being untrustworthy, and there being something dangerous in his eyes. She thought she was being objective, but her friends noted the slight bitterness in her caricatures of his speech and manners.

Within herself, she did not care whether the others speculated about the cause of this. She knew. To her, he would always be the infidel, but despite this, she knew that if the time were ever to come again when he turned those eyes toward her, she would go to him. She could not help it.





**MURDER**  
by Mario Quintana

## TITAN

Nathan W. Harter

In exile to a galaxy afar,  
With eyes yet breaching leagues and leagues of night,  
The titan stares, transfixed by one faint light  
Which pierces his soul like a scimitar;  
And well he knows the depths of heaven bar  
The titan's ever tempting fate with flight  
That he resume his irreligious fight  
Beneath the beaming brightness of that star.

From out the shadowed ferment of his world,  
It festers in the bellows of his breast;  
It rages through his bosom with a roar,  
And echoes, curse on curse, to skies unfurled,  
Rocking Olympus at its crest.  
"To be a god!" — then silence evermore.

## ELEGIAC SONNET II

Nathan W. Harter

Stop! Close those unenchanted eyes  
And listen to the forest as we pass:  
The murmured rubrics of a Druid mass  
Among the twisted branches wend and rise.  
In echoes of a desolate demise,  
Now heaped with fallen timber, moss, and grass.  
But harken to a cruder sing—alas—  
The hoary-headed priest no longer cries.

Where lie the moldering bones among the leaves,  
The hollow breast wherein the forest breathed  
Its elemental chord? My soul bereaves  
The silent cities, buried and unwreathed,  
Revisited when late, autumnal eves  
A lover hears what he has been bequeathed.

## DEATH TO A FRIEND

Jeff Johnson

In the case of survival, animals must regress to their basic needs and instincts. It was a warm mid-July day in Katmando, a small town at the base of the Green Mountains in Vermont. Walter and Blanch Shrupp were leaving on vacation for Sarasota, Florida. They left behind their two oddly compatible pets, Felix and Ellwanger.

Felix was a stray cat that had become a house pet. He had long fur, which was yellow and white mixed throughout his body. Felix was a large cat with piercing blue eyes, perhaps of a mixed persian breed. He loved to give and receive affection, especially when it came to other animals. Ellwanger was a year and-a-half old hamster. He looked like a golden puff ball because of his ravenous appetite.



The pets were to be taken care of by the Shrups' neighbor. But their neighbors had not received these instructions. Now Ellwanger and Felix had to stay by themselves for the next week. Normally this situation would not have affected the two pets. They had been the best of friends for over a year. When they were both young and growing up together, they would play day in and day out. While their owners, Walter and Blanch Shrupp, were at work, they would be each other's companion. Felix would often allow Ellwanger to sleep next to him.

The first day of their abandonment Felix helped nudge Ellwanger out of his cage. After the escape from the cage, the two pets scurried off to look out the window. Felix would sit on a table with Ellwanger below him on a window sill. They would spend hours of their day watching other animals play outside. A bird occasionally flew by, which would arouse Felix. After a while this became boring and they would chase each other about the house. They would scamper over chairs, under the couch, and down the stairs; but always in a jovial way so as not to hurt one another. They often stopped for a quick bit to eat or to catch their breath. Felix gobbled up his remaining food from last night's dinner, not realizing that it was the end of his food supply. By midday Felix had rolled up in a ball to sleep and Ellwanger was lying up against his companion's furry belly. Felix woke up and jumped to the floor where he went through his routine of stretching. After cleaning his paws, Felix meandered to the kitchen where he found an empty food dish. He decided to go back to the couch and sleep since his owners had forgotten to feed him. This was the first time the two pets had slept an entire night together.

Waking on the second day, Felix and Ellwanger found that their owners had not yet been home, and indeed this was strange. So far there had not been any conflicts between them and they carried on as the day before. Hunger started to set in by afternoon. Ellwanger's cage was well stocked with food; therefore, he could eat at any time by crawling in and out of his cage. On the other hand, Felix roamed the house trying to find just a morsel of food. By nightfall Felix had become very edgy. This night Felix would not allow Ellwanger to sleep with him.

By the third morning the tension was approaching a peak. Felix had become increasingly irritated by hunger. Ellwanger sensed a change in Felix and he tried to console him. Now Felix's instincts had taken over. He eyed his companion as a source of life. Ellwanger noticed the piercing glare and his love for Felix turned to fear.

Ellwanger's only hope was to get to his cage. Felix was much quicker and he cut Ellwanger off en route to it. This time the chase was for real and not playing as always before. Now Felix had trapped his prey in a corner. Blinded by instinct and a chance for survival, Felix attacked his once loved friend. Following the traumatic event, Felix would never be the same.

## IN PUERO

Frank Werner

I lie on the rug face down, hugging the rug with my outstretched arms. It is rough and warm against my face. Mommy walks into the room. I look at her, and she looks at me for a long time. Her face is sad, and I can see tears in her eyes. Then her face turns angry—she says something, but I can't understand what she is saying. She turns around and walks back into the kitchen.

Over at the window by the door, my sister, Carol, sits in the old armchair. She sits without moving, staring out the window, watching between the blinds. Her feet are tucked under her, and her chin rests on her knees. Her long blonde hair hangs down around her shoulders and legs. The way she is sitting makes her lean so far forward, it seems she will roll out of the chair onto the floor. I turn on my back and watch her. It is funny to watch her sit so still upside down. After a while, it is hard to tell whether she is upside down, or I'm upside down, or whether the whole room is turning over and over. The sunlight from outside comes through the blinds, making shiny bright stripes across Carol's face and hair. I follow the stripes away from her face, out into the air.

The stripes seem to hang in the air above me. I can see little bits of dust whirling about, sparkling in the light. I reach my hands up to grab them, but the little bits of dust go every direction until they have disappeared. Slowly they start to sparkle again. I wait until the stripe seems full of them, then I shake my hands again and watch them scatter once more.

Mommy comes into the room again, and sits down on the sofa. I look at her face; it is sad again. She hugs her chest with her arms. Her



hands are tucked up under her arms so tightly it looks as if she has no hands. She keeps saying things. I can't hear what she is saying, but everytime she talks her lower lip moves. She sits there on the sofa and watches me play with the stripes in the air. Sitting and talking, and not making a sound.

"Daddy's home," Carol says as she jumps up from the chair and opens the door.

Mommy reaches down and picks me up. She hugs me close to her, so close that I want to get away. She looks at me as if I have hurt her. So I stand still in front of the sofa with her arms wrapped around me. Through the open door I can see Carol and Daddy as they come up the steps.

He stops in the doorway. His face seems so tired. His thin body seems to fade into the bright blue light beyond the door. Just as it seems he will disappear into that light, he steps inside.

Mommy stares at him for a long time. Then in a hard voice she says, "I hope you know, what you've done isn't legal. I wasn't there."

"Louise, you could have come downtown this morning."

"Oh yes, that's just what you would have liked for me to do, isn't it?" Daddy closes the door then asks my sister, "Where are your brothers?"

"They left," Carol says as she crawls back into the armchair.

He walks over to the chair and looks out the window, then down at her, smoothing her hair with his hand. She looks up at him and smiles. Slowly Daddy walks into the kitchen. From in there I can hear a cupboard door open, then the water splashing in the sink.

Mommy stands up and moves around the room, picking things up and putting them back down again. Her lower lip is moving, but I can't hear anything. She just keeps moving around the room. I want to move away from the sofa, but I can't. I stand and watch my mother's lip move. Her face isn't angry now, nor is it sad.

"Someone's here," my sister says.

I run over to the window to see. Out by the curb a big, white station wagon is parked. On its door is a large, round picture, but it is too far away to see the picture. It glitters of gold and silver.

A big woman steps out of the car. She looks like a policeman because she wears a dark jacket and a long, dark shirt. On her head she has a funny little cap, but I don't think she is a policeman because she doesn't have a badge or a gun.



A skinny man walks up next to the woman from in front of the car. His long, white shirt sleeves are rolled up on his arms. Together they walk up toward the house.

Daddy walks outside and the three of them stand talking on the porch. The skinny man is holding a strange jacket draped over his arm. It has long sleeves, and lots of belts that swing back and forth below his arm when he moves. He has a big pointy bump on his neck that bounces everytime he talks. The skin on his neck tightens and sags and the bump moves up and down, up and down.

I walk from the window over to Mommy, but she moves away, backing further into the room. The big woman and the skinny man step through the doorway. Daddy stays outside facing the street. The big woman smiles, her thin lips parting to show tiny white teeth as she says, "Come on now Louise, it's time to leave." Her voice makes me hate her.

"Don't call me Louise—I don't know you," Mommy shouts. Her anger makes her mouth an ugly thing.

"I hope we're not going to have any trouble," the woman says, still smiling.

The skinny man steps up beside the woman holding out the jacket with all the belts, "Are we going to need the restraint?"

"No, I don't think that will be necessary, do you Louise?" She is still smiling as she pulls a pair of handcuffs from under her jacket.

"Nooo," Mommy begins to moan, "no please, not here in front of them." Tears are running down her cheeks so fast Mommy has to shake her head to see.

"Okay Louise, let's go outside," the smile says.

The two of them each take one of my mother's arms and lead her out on the porch. Her body sags between them. Outside Mommy starts crying to Daddy. "No, Paul, please don't let them do this. Please, Paul, I'll be better, I promise." He stands looking out at the street, saying nothing. The big woman starts to put the handcuffs on my mother's wrists. I run out on the porch screaming, "Why are they arresting Mommy, why are they taking her?" Daddy grabs me as I swing and kick at them. He stops me, kneeling and holding me tight in his arms. I stand breathing hard, tears running down my face, and my jaw aching as I try to stop crying. My mother bends down to me, pressing her wet cheek on mine, "It'll be alright, don't cry." Then looking into my father's face, she says with so much hatred that my tears stop, "I hope you're pleased with yourself, that these two babies have witnessed

this." He says nothing, but stands up, resting his hands on my shoulders. Mommy stands and turns to the woman, "Okay, I'm ready—I don't care if I ever come back again."

The three of them walk out to the station wagon. The skinny man and big woman help Mommy into the back seat. Then they get into the car, start the motor, and drive away.

I stand watching down the street long after the car is out of sight. Behind me, Daddy tells me to get my things together, that I will be staying with aunt Martha for a while. But I don't move. I stand looking down the street. I can still hear the little tapping noises of the engine as it moved away from the curb.

Daddy comes out on the porch and leads me into the house—back into the bedroom that I share with my brothers and sister. He begins to take things from my drawer and puts them into a big, brown grocery sack. I stand in the middle of the room. I know I'm in my room, but I can still hear the engine as it moves from street to street, and joins other cars.

All I can think of are those last words, "I don't care if I ever come back again."

## LEGACY

Gina R. E. Zellmer

(To my father, who unknowingly calls me "Bastard").

I have yet to see you . . .  
though I see with your eyes.

Nor, have I ever loved you,  
though I feel a strong maddening surge  
within me . . .  
which must be love.

There have never been words between us,  
and I wonder . . .  
will there ever be  
with the father who calls his own child . . .  
"Bastard"?

Dear father, my heart grins at you,  
at one that knows no love . . .  
no companion . . .

I am but a single angel sent from Heaven,  
to weep but one tear of sorrow . . .

on your grave.



## BARRY GOOD

Larry W. Smith

It's a barry good world  
full of barry good people  
they all drive cars  
made by barry good  
and when they go home  
they read books and listen to music  
all copyrighted by barry good  
they buy their contraceptives  
from stores owned by barry good  
barry good gives them the news  
in their newspapers and tv sets  
and barry good is responsible for  
the highway network and the national defense  
it is barry good that says "this is a test"  
when the radios go "bleep"  
it is barry good who designed the hoover dam  
and all the people read about the daring exploits  
of barry good in the society columns and in Rolling Stone  
(also owned and edited by barry good)  
barry good is the one who taught music to  
Stravinsky, Miles Davis, and Jimi Hendrix  
barry good is always the best at anything,  
and can beat anyone at barroom games  
all the people lead mock barry good lives trying to be barry good  
but no one can be barry good as well as barry good can  
this is why people are so sad most of the time  
may God help them  
and may God help barry good (if He can)

## CAPRICCIO

Frank Werner

He held his cigarette in his right hand, occasionally using it as an extension to his fingers, whenever he wished to emphasize a point, which was in his wife's mind too often. She hated cigarette smoke. As soon as he lit up, her sinuses filled with what she pictured as a combination of oatmeal and Elmer's Glue. Even when he was not smoking, the odor lingered about him, in his clothes, on his breath, and on the tips of his fingers; only this smell was well established, settled in and occupying his space. Their home was littered with half full or overflowing ash trays that filled each room with this dry, pervasive stench. She never seemed to be able to escape it, even when they went out visiting or to a party, as they were now, the first thing he did upon crossing the threshold was to light a cigarette and fill the air with his trademark, his cologne.

She watched him as he gesticulated an ash onto his pants, and a thought into the discussion. Once again his mind was entirely engaged with the ideas of the conversation. Not the people or what they were specifically saying, but with that kernel of thought shrouded in their words. His brow was knitted in tension as he sought to control his responses, to keep from losing his audience in a wave of complexity, but his eyes showed a keen excitement at having some forum for the exchange and pronouncing of ideas. She knew only too well exactly what was happening inside his head, having seen that same expression on his face many times. He had a passion for engaging in an intellectual discussion, and would begin one with whomever he was with, on whatever level was required. Most often it was, as now, at a cocktail party, or at some semi-formal gathering. One could almost hear the little gears clicking, she thought, and the motors revving. Was that ozone she smelled—no he had lit another cigarette.

She had lost track as to exactly what the discussion was dealing with some time ago. Not that it was boring; they were never boring. On the contrary, they tended to be lively and fresh; let's see, provocative? Yes, that was it, they were provocative. He always approached every subject with a new twist, and sought to keep the debates continuing for as long as possible by expanding them onto any one of a hundred possible tangents. That was what he called them, debates. Which in his

mind resembled something of a mental gymnastic free-for-all. In her mind these little talks resembled a verbal street fight between a leather toggled gang and the local assistant librarian, who was armed only with, an amazing memory for statements made five minutes earlier that contradicted what the same speaker was saying now. No, it was not that they were boring, it was just that she had grown accustomed to this form of gladitorial combat. She had reached a level of catharsis, purged of the evils that created a need for these debates; she had nothing to say.

She was amazed that no one else heard the little popping and clicking sounds that were coming from under his dark brown hair. She watched him as he tipped his head back to drain the last drops of bourbon from his glass. The sharp features of his profile and that full head of hair took on an aura, almost a halo affect, as his head was framed in the light of the lamp from the end of the couch. You shouldn't, was what she thought, as he turned to her, holding out his glass and flashing that please-run-off-and-fetch-me-some-more smile. Or at least run-off-and-fetch-your-own. "The same thing?", she asked, he nodded yes, then turned his attention back to the discussion. She took up the glass and rose with the burdening knowledge that more would add a great deal to his passion when they arrived home, but very little to his performance. But she could tell by the volume and pitch of his voice that his mental governor was losing control, and that soon he would expand the conversation beyond the interest and ability of this audience of mixed intellects. The debate would be over, and he, not really being the type for light social talk, would need something to entertain himself.

As she weaved her way through the other guests, answering this person's query about her children, and asking that one about their own, she realized that she was really not the type for this banter either. When one really thought about it, the same questions were always asked by the same or similar people about the same or similar subjects. It occurred to her that it was quite easy to fill up an evening, a great deal of time in fact, covering territory that was well known. I suppose, she thought, that people are just trying to fill up all those empty moments in their lives that are so particularly embarrassing when in public. Someone should really write a book of etiquette that said it was perfectly acceptable at a gathering for occasional moments when the air was filled only with the rather attractive sound of ice tinkling against glass, or perhaps a warming sigh. Rather than embarrassing,



these moments should be considered as signifying relaxed reflection, of enjoyment. That is unlikely though, she concluded, since these gatherings were meant to fill up time; though by the next morning the time seemed to have slipped away, empty.

She finally reached her goal, poured his drink, and began once again to thread her way through the guests, more carefully this time, so as not to spill the liquor. Someone she knew she should remember from somewhere stopped her and introduced her to her escort. He was tall, blond headed and rugged looking; very attractive she thought. She talked and joked with them for awhile, then excused herself and headed towards her husband. Upon reaching the room he was in, she realized that the discussion had ended much sooner than she thought it would. Most of the participants were paired up in small talk or roaming about searching for new faces. Her husband was sitting off in a corner in an overstuffed chair, seemingly swallowed by its rounded wings and arms. In front of him, on an ottoman, was sitting a young woman who was carefully rolling a joint. Every time she saw her husband readying to smoke grass she was a little taken aback, not being attracted to it herself. She was well aware that it had recently received the status of indifference at these suburban gatherings, and she didn't think it any more harmful than alcohol; but it was just part of her middle class up-bringing that always made her feel negatively towards the use of marijuana. Since her husband did not use either alcohol or grass with frequency, the grass much less, she was not upset by his actions, just surprised. He was sitting there in that misbegotten renovation of a chair with such a funny smirk on his face, that she wondered whether he was ogling his conversation partner or anticipating the pot. The young woman, she had gathered when introduced earlier in the evening, was a new employee of the host. A recent graduate of a local university, who had an excess of energy and was lacking a foundation garment. She had thought at the time, that what that girl needed was a couple of kids under her belt to sort of knock that "I've got a career" wind from her rosy cheeks. Oh well, she shrugged, he won't be needing the booze. She turned from the room and began milling among the other guests. Spending a short time discussing with the host and hostess a new print they had bought, and a little more time with her husband's accountant listening to the attributes of a new chemical manure he was using on his lawn. She finally ended up standing outside a large room that was being used by several couples for dancing. The lights in the room were low and the music inviting; it was a slow

melodic piece with a jazz or blues influence. As she stood listening, the sensual strains seemed to permeate through her skull, removing the awareness of all that was going on around her. The music made her body feel as though it were floating and yet something deep within was touched with a mournful melancholy. It felt as though something had reached into her chest; had touched a thing that only a woman has, and grasped it. She felt lonely, and isolated, as if she were the only woman in a room filled with alien creatures. Behind her breast there was a terrible tightness; she felt as though her heart would not withstand the strain, then much more quickly than when it had begun, the pressure eased, and eased, until that thing within her was released and was free. At this freedom her body began to move, it would not have been noticed by the casual observer, she was simply swaying with the rhythm. It suddenly occurred to her that someone behind her had said something to her. "What," she said as she turned. It was the tall blond fellow. "I said, you surprise me, I would not have taken you for a straight bourbon drinker." "Oh, I'm not," she answered, "this was for my husband, but I don't think he'll need it now." She set the drink on a nearby console and resumed watching the dancers. The tall blond nodded and then turned his attention to the room from which the music was coming. After a short while he turned back to her and asked if she would like to dance. "I would like that very much." They moved into the room and began to dance, occasionally talking, acquainting themselves with one another, but mostly they quietly danced. Soon her mind began again to tune itself once more to the mood of the music, and to that thing loose inside her. It seemed to her that the sound was penetrating her entire being, not violating, or controlling her will, but awakening something primal, something disguised but very important. She felt her skin come alive with a tingling sensitivity, and her muscles contracting and relaxing ever so slightly, occasional rushes of excitement. She looked up at the tall blond to respond to a question and was struck by his handsomeness. She felt the solid musculature of his back beneath her hand, and the firmness and control of his hand around hers. The tempo of the song increased, and so did the blood pulsing through her arteries. Within her there was a struggle of restraint and propriety against an intensifying excitement. The threatening feeling of isolation had evolved into one of personal solitude, as though she were dancing alone, and the force that moved and affected her was the music itself. She maneuvered him so that they were dancing closer, so that she could feel the warmth and solidness of his full front,



partially resting her head on his shoulder. As they danced she could feel her dress and bra slide slightly across her skin, wherever their bodies touched, and the awareness of this movement of fabric made her skin all the more sensitive. She pulled their bodies closer so that she could feel this tiny friction across her stomach and the tops of her thighs. She wondered what it would be like to make love to this healthy young man. She felt the tiny hairs on the back of her neck raise as she considered the possibilities. Why couldn't she have an affair with him, or any other as far as that went? After all, what percentage of those young women she had noticed her husband mentally disrobing had he actually made a play for? No that wasn't fair, he looked but was too timid to touch. But why not she? Many of her friends had. They never came out and admitted as much, but when talking or joking about men, they always had that certain facial expression. You knew they could say a great deal more, and they didn't seem to look too ashamed at the knowledge. A life-time with one man had always seemed enough, but still, what would it be like with another man. "So many do," she said, "why not me?" The tall blond looked at her with a puzzled expression, "I'm sorry, what did you say?" "Oh nothing, nothing at all. I was just thinking aloud." She felt her skin tingle with excitement after this response, and pressed herself even more firmly against him. She wondered if his thoughts were running in a similar vein, then suddenly she was struck by this thought. What was he thinking? Throughout all of this he had acted naturally, in one sense almost too naturally. She felt that he had behaved the perfect gentleman, and after all, she had done some things that must have seemed to be quite a come on. At the same moment she realized that none of it had been a come on, none of it was immoral, amoral, improper, or un-American. She was not seeking an affair. Rather it had been more of a personal moment of sensuous pleasure, gained more through her mind than their companionship. He would not even have had to be here for this to happen, she thought. Oh yes, she would have been able to rationalize such an encounter with him very easily, while they had been dancing, but that was not what she was after. It was not exactly the sort of experience that one discussed with their Republican committeeman, or even one's husband, but perhaps she misjudged him, her husband that is. The music ended and together they moved off to the side of the dance floor. She felt giddy and light-headed, as though she had been birthed again—as though she was passing quickly through her youth. At one point she caught herself hunching her shoulders forward,



allowing more of her cleavage to his view, she forcibly reminded herself of her age. As the topics for general conversation appeared to be running out, he thanked her for the dance and excused himself to go seek his partner for the evening. He had not once mentioned the woman's name, and try as she might, she still could not recall it.

She found herself once more seeking out her husband, returning to him, locating him exactly where she had left him, half swallowed in the overstuffed armchair. The young woman was still sitting on the ottoman, only now she was the one who was doing all the talking, punctuating the air with her finger. Her husband's countenance showed signs of mild disgust, in fact she could tell that he was bored senseless. Upon seeing his wife, his thick dark eyebrows arched up in anticipatory relief. As she walked over to them her husband rose and introduced the young woman, then he bid an enthusiastic but polite farewell and ushered his wife out of the room. "That young woman," he said as they almost were out of earshot, "is an indefatigable talker, something of a bore actually." "Oh really," she smiled, "I sort of felt she reminded me of you in certain ways, when you were younger that is." He laughed and responded, "Well in that case perhaps there is hope for her, but she really ought to wear a bra, she's much too big to go around like that."

It occurred to her, as he was helping her into her coat, that she really had nothing to fear from this or any other healthy young woman. What she and her husband had was a mutually comfortable relationship. Neither one felt awkward or embarrassed with the other. It was true their life together was only occasionally exciting. But it was a very gratifying life together. Besides more than enough surprises came one's way in life. She had nothing to fear from that young woman, and he had nothing to fear from tall, handsome, young, blond males; or that thing disguised within her, in fact he had much to be gained by that.

They said their goodbyes to the host and hostess and headed out the door for their car; he puffing ecstatically on a cigarette, she deeply inhaling the fresh night air.

## THE FRIENDLY PERSUASION

Anonymous

All violence drained from him when he picked up the guitar and began to play:

His muscles lost their menace,  
His square jaw softened around the corners,  
The fire in his eyes was extinguished with tears.

Each note he strummed was a caress:

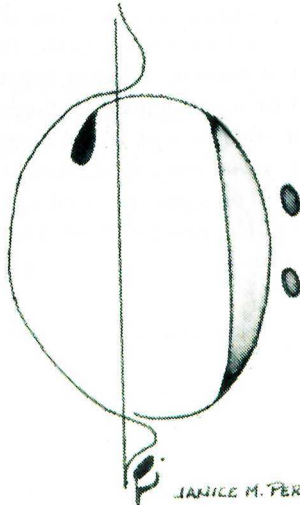
Sometimes his fingers fondled the strings like a father with a newborn child.

Sometimes they probed with the passionate curiosity of a lover.  
Always their stroking turned sad into happy, bad into good.

As I watched him play

I imagined him incapable of hating  
or lying  
or killing

And I wished that more people would persuade with guitars  
Instead of guns.



## NOTRE DAME

Marta Phillips

Something happens in the one small step it takes to cross from the outdoors of Paris into the cathedral of Notre Dame. It is as though someone says "Shh!"—not loudly, but emphatically. Once inside, all you hear is the soft mutter of hushed voices, mingled in awe and prayer. The immensity and timelessness of the church are overwhelming. Huge ribs of stone soar to the ceiling dramatically. Your eyes become accustomed to the dim light until you glance up at the laughing, dazzling stained glass windows. The sun cannot bounce through the bright, thick glass, but still hits your eyes with a little push. The intensity makes you squint. You follow the colors of the window, the delightful rainbow pattern. The somber marble statues which line the walls many feet below are quite a contrast. The air inside the cathedral is cool and dank, penetrated by other smells: the presence of many bodies, the warm smell of burning candles beneath the waiting statues, and the musty smell of many centuries. Steps sound hollow against the heavy cement floor. The curious crowd never stops. Fingers point, heads turn heavenward, jaws drop and children call in excited, restrained voices to their parents. The voices rise and fall. But the cathedral remains. The peace is there. The peace of Notre Dame.



## I SPEAK TOO MUCH OF STARS

Nathan W. Harter

I speak too much of stars: My poetry  
Exceeds my logic, which is God to me.  
    Such dreams should not be spoken; let them pass  
    Into the vectors of a looking-glass,  
Elusive in a finer quadrant, free.

To speak of stars and conjure-up a hill  
So high it meets the stars and rises still,  
    To entertain the madness of a man  
    Whose flight and wistful fortune want a plan  
Works murder in the dark cathedral chill.

I speak of stars; I reach for stars. I find  
These tired limbs too mortal for this mind,  
    And all the poet hoped to capture with  
    The gilded word and mesmerizing myth  
Becomes as splendid color to the blind.

So let me cry, as all men someday must,  
That thrones are tarnished by our mortal dust,  
    Defiant windmills stand against the sky  
    And shall until the last Quixotes die,  
Surviving through the years each desperate thrust.

I am not God, and that is all I fear.  
There is no better definition here  
    For all that is, and was, and would have been  
    Within the tragic fantasies of men.  
But *damn* the stars, so crystalline and clear!

A MAN'Z A MAN WHO LOOKS A MAN  
RIGHT BETWEEN THE EYES

Frank Werner

John and Thresha were both standing at the large, plate glass window when the long limousine pulled up to the curb. They had received a call from her father a few minutes before. He wanted to come over at lunch time to talk with them, and they had agreed to see him. John looked questioningly at Thresha.

"Who else?" she replied to the unstated question. She turned and began making a wide path from the door to the rear of the office where there was a large, round table.

"I think we can all fit in here, don't you?" she asked.

"Yeah, that'll do fine."

Outside from the driver's side of the car, a huge, hulking man rose from the shiny black surface of the car's roof. His face was knitted in a menacing scowl, with dark eyes that stared thoughtlessly out from under two busy eyebrows. The man turned walking toward the rear of the limousine. His chest appeared to be the size of a whiskey barrel. When he reached the rear of the car he stopped and opened the trunk, taking from it an expensive looking, collapsible wheelchair. He set this on the sidewalk and then stepped around to open the rear passenger door. From out of the car the huge man gently lifted a small, older man whose legs swayed lifelessly as the huge chauffeur turned and set him carefully into the unfolded wheelchair. The pair slowly began advancing toward the door. John opened the metal framed glass door as they reached it, and they advanced just inside.

The old man's small face broke into a smile as he greeted his daughter, "Thresha darling, it's good to see you."

"Hello Dad, how are you feeling?" she asked as she bent over the seated figure, giving him a polite kiss on the cheek.

"Oh, you know me, I'm always ready and raring to go."

"Why don't we move back to the table. I think I've cleared enough space for your chair."

"Yes, that'll be fine," her father said. "Won't it Mike?" The hulk grunted affirmatively and began to push the chair toward the back of the room.

"And you, John, how have you been? It's been a while since I saw you last. Just a little before the two of you went on that trip east I think."

John glanced at Thresha, whose head seemed to lift, but she did not turn around. "I'm doing fine, Mr. Fischel."

"Mr. Fischel, what's this Mr. Fischel stuff? Call me Harry. After all, you and my daughter are practically married."

"Dad, we've been through this before. John and I live together because that's the way we want it, without marriage."

"I just hope you're ready to pay for any consequences."

"Look Dad, I'm really not in the mood for this discussion."

"Yes, you're right. It's none of my business to interfere with your private life. Besides, that's not why I'm here."

They all situated themselves around the table, the broad shouldered chauffeur a few steps behind Thresha's father.

"Why did you come—Harry?"

"To talk a little politics, John."

"Whose?" John asked as he closely observed the older man's face. Thresha's father leaned back in his wheelchair, his eyes said nothing of what he was thinking, but he appeared to be sizing up everything and everyone.

"Ours, son, ours," said the tight lined mouth.

"I didn't know we had the same politics."

"You're running for office in this state, so there's a connection. I have to admit, I admire what you've done. You've taken a tiny independent party, put some life into it. You're getting quite a lot of attention in the press."

"I've geared my campaign to a heavy media exposure."

"I've noticed, and that's quite a trick." The small head turned, surveying the cluttered and crowded office. "Especially on what I imagine to be rather limited funds."

John looked at him blankly, hoping not to betray the truth of this statement.

"You know, this room," Harry said, "this room brings back a lot of memories for me. Back in the thirties, before the war, the union movement was like this. Those were tough times. A lot like today, a good deal of violence. I was just a volunteer then, didn't get a dime for my work. The movement couldn't afford it. But I was healthy then, and I was lucky because I had a job. A lot of us didn't. If they knew you were a union man, out you went. That was all before the accident of



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course. There's something a little tragic about a man becoming crippled by his work. Well, when I came out of the hospital, I swore I was going to make all job sites safe for the workers. And I've been lucky at that. There's been progress. Seeing you working here, it makes me think we do have common political interests."

"I'm not sure I can agree with that."

"John, I've been paying close attention to your campaign—Human Social Justice—that's the theme isn't it? Well I believe

we both have the interest of the average man at heart."

"I'm concerned with all peoples, the weak, the strong, and the average man, as you call him."

"But you are concerned with protecting his interest."

"Go on."

The old man's eyebrows moved closer together as he stared intently at John. "You've been coming down pretty heavy on the incumbent."

"You mean I've been coming down pretty heavy on your man."

"He's the party's man."

"It's your party."

"Now you see, John, that's where you're wrong—a little naive about the real situation. He's not my man and the party is not in my hip pocket. You're relatively new to this area; you don't understand that what we have is a fragile coalition of certain groups."

"I imagine I understand more than you think I do."

"Do you? I hope so. Because, you see, with the last reapportionment, certain pressures have been put on that coalition. And while you have no chance of winning, you're drawing votes from a man who can serve the majority interest."

"So what are you leading up to?"

"Well, what I'm going to my hand by way of my elbow for is this—I want you to drop out of the race."

John looked at the small, wrinkled face for a moment, then he began to laugh. "You surprise me, Mr. Fischel. I thought these sorts of deals were worked out in smoke-filled backrooms. Aren't you from the old school? If your candidate can't take the heat, he should get out of the kitchen."

"John, I'm trying to logically appeal to your desire to help the people who need help the most. There is absolutely no way you can win this race—even come close."

"Winning isn't everything. We're giving ourselves a platform from which our ideas can openly be discussed."

The old man's face contorted in anger. "Oh, don't give me that free expression rhetoric. What you're selling is just watered down socialism, and as long as it has that label, it will never succeed in this country. But you're damaging a man who does have a chance to continue the progress of the last few years. Why him? You haven't even touched the opposition. Why not go after the real enemy?"

"I don't see either one of them as the enemy," John said coldly,



"but there are some important principles on which your candidate and I disagree."

"You've got to set aside your idealism and think about the practical consequences at stake."

"For six years your man has consistently supported a war, a police action, an atrocity of human effort and life and that is a practical consequence I cannot ignore."

"No one likes this war, John, but sometimes they are necessary. Necessary to protect the national interests, to protect the very lifestyle which can assist those here at home with whom you're most concerned."

"If you mean to measure the cost of our lifestyle by the human life destroyed to maintain it, then the price is too high. If that's the cost of our standard of living—only that—then we need to reevaluate the way we live."

"I doubt whether the majority of people would agree with you. What you are suggesting would destroy the very dreams of the people you say you want to help."

"You and your party have been treading water on those dreams for years."

"No! No, John, I've helped them. I've given them a better life than they ever hoped for."

"You've given them nothing. False hopes and empty promises. Oh yes, they may have a new car to park beside their new home, but what happens when they wake up one morning and find their neighborhood has become a battleground. When they realize that your dream has led them to mistrust the man next door, the man down the street, the man on the other side of the city. That dream you're pushing around reduces life to avarice, acquisition, and waste. Because of what? Because you went through a depression, and times were tough? Times are tough all over the world—now!"

"What do you know about the Depression? Did you ever have to live in one or two small rooms with a dozen other people? Did you ever experience the weight of not being able to provide for yourself, let alone a family? You don't even know what real hunger is, and why? Because today someone's there to provide a meal if you're onto hard luck. Well, where do you think those programs came from? It certainly wasn't from all those ivory-towered intellectuals you're so full of. We had those in my day too, but they sat around crying about the damage to human dignity, and the demise of true beauty in the human spirit. You've



learned some very inspiring ideas, John. You've learned how to emotionally incite a man with words, maybe even incite him to fight, but I've progressed beyond that. I've built. By putting a hot meal in a man's belly, I've taken away his urge to destroy, and made him want to build too. By giving him direction and goals I've kept the stability . . ."

"Stability! At what cost to the individual? You've reduced him to a consuming automaton, insensitive, unthinking . . ."

"There's too much thinking being done by those who can't do so correctly."

"You hypocrite! You're nothing but an elitist snob who sneers at the human potential."

The old man leaned back, obviously exhausted by this unexpected argument. "No, John, I'm a realist. I've lived too long not to admit the reality of mass judgement. And I don't think I'll have too much longer to try to accomplish the things I feel are important. I'm trying to persuade you to be practical."

"Don't be condescending with me."

"You're like a child who has strayed into something he doesn't understand, and you don't realize the damage you're doing."

"Damage to what? Your ego—your memorial before you die?"

"This has obviously strayed from the main issue."

"A dead issue."

"Will you withdraw from the race?"

"I intend to do everything in my power to prevent you from winning—everything."

"I'm trying to reason with you—think logically."

"Your logic is that of the snake to the sparrow."

"There are other ways to eliminate you as a factor in this campaign."

"If you're implying some sort of smear, I'm not terribly worried. There's nothing about my personal life of which I am ashamed or embarrassed."

"Perhaps not, John." The old man reached into his suit jacket and withdrew a clean white envelope, setting it in the middle of the table.

"Very dramatic! What's supposed to be in there?"

Thresha's father looked at his daughter for a moment, then turned back toward John. "Those are photostats of the New York hospital papers, signed by you, and assuming financial responsibility for my daughter's abortion, dated a little over three months ago."

John looked over to Thresha with her mouth drawn tight. She was

staring at her father, but she said nothing. He stared icily at the old man. "A lot of people are changing their minds about abortion."

"That's true, but unfortunately, those are not the people whose support you can claim. You may not have studied the demographics of the area. I have. You're drawing very heavily on the young vote, college students, and newly-married blue collar workers. Your anti-war stance and call for individual dignity appeals to them very much. But most of those come from ethnic Catholic backgrounds, like Thresha. Oh, they may be a little rebellious, youthful, but that's what's politically in vogue. It gives their new vote a sense of power. But when this comes out, and I have the ability to release it through the credible media. When this comes out, that background is going to cause them to look at you with different eyes."

"But you won't do that, will you, Daddy?" Thresha spoke up. You see I'm not very proud of that, and I don't think I could stand having other people know."

"Think about it, John."

"You would do this, wouldn't you? You know it won't affect me at all, but what about your daughter?"

"I'm practical, John. I have to solve problems the best way I can."

"Daddy?"

Thresha's father reached his hand across the table to hers. "I'm sorry, Baby, but it's all in John's hands now." She pushed his hand away and turned toward the wall. The old man looked behind himself. "Okay Mike, let's go." The huge chauffeur stepped up to the wheelchair, gripped its handles and turned it toward the door.

John looked at Thresha. She was staring at the wall, but he could tell that a tremendous rage was boiling inside her.

At the door the wheelchair turned back toward the table. "You said, John, it didn't matter whether or not you win as long as I lose. But in this race you can't defeat me." The chair turned around again, and the small man and the hulk departed through the open door.

John sat looking at Thresha for a long time in silence, then she turned to face him.

"John, I don't think I could stand it—having other people know. Maybe someday, but not yet."

"I know," he said.

"What are we going to do?"

"I don't know," he answered, "I just don't know."